

# ***South Carolina Department of Agriculture***

Hugh Weathers, Commissioner

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 2, 2008**

## **Attention Farmers! Buy-in Waiver Fee for Disaster Assistance Programs Due September 16**

COLUMBIA, SC – USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will allow producers who would otherwise be ineligible for the new disaster assistance programs to become eligible by paying a fee as required by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Act).

The 2008 Act requires Producers who wish to participate in the new disaster programs are required to have crop insurance or non-insured crop disaster assistance (NAP) coverage for the land for which assistance is being requested, and for all farms in all counties in which they have an interest. Since the 2008 Act was enacted after the application periods had closed for those programs, producers who did not have such coverage could not comply with this requirement in order to be eligible for the new disaster programs. However, the 2008 Act authorizes a waiver that allows producers to pay a fee, called a "buy-in" fee, to be eligible for this new disaster assistance.

Every producer whose crops, including grazing lands, are not fully covered by crop insurance or NAP may take advantage of this one-time opportunity. The buy-in fee is due no later than Sept. 16, 2008, 90 days after the date of enactment, as required by the 2008 Act. Those who miss this opportunity will not be eligible for disaster assistance.

Producers are also reminded that the payment of the applicable buy-in fee does not afford the producer crop insurance or NAP coverage. It only affords eligibility for the 2008 disaster programs.

For more information about the Buy-in Waiver for Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs, call your local USDA Farm Service Agency or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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